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ABSTRACT

To more nearly relate teaching skills or enabling competencies to the real performance world of the teacher, the Teacher Corps program at Emporia State College proposes that the intern demonstrate teacher competencies through a series of performance projects in each of five performance areas. These performance areas, selected from the real experience world of the intern, are: (1) facilitating the growth and development of individual students; (2) providing instruction and facilitating group processes with a group of students; (3) promoting a positive climate in the school; (4) facilitating school involvement in the community and community involvement in the school; and (5) communicating ideas and experiences to others in the teaching profession. The individual in training contracts for projects and is responsible to the training team for demonstrating that (1) the objectives of the project were achieved and (2) that a systematic learning process was used in planning and implementing the project. The key to the successful completion of a performance project is the Systematic Learning Process Model involving 12 stages: initial search; debriefing and clarifying goals; data collection and initial write-up; strategy development; consideration of skills and resources; final write-up; competency development; project approval; project implementation; project write-up; project evaluation; and sign-off or recycle. Possible performance projects in each of the five areas are illustrated, and some specific comments about performance projects are presented. (MM)

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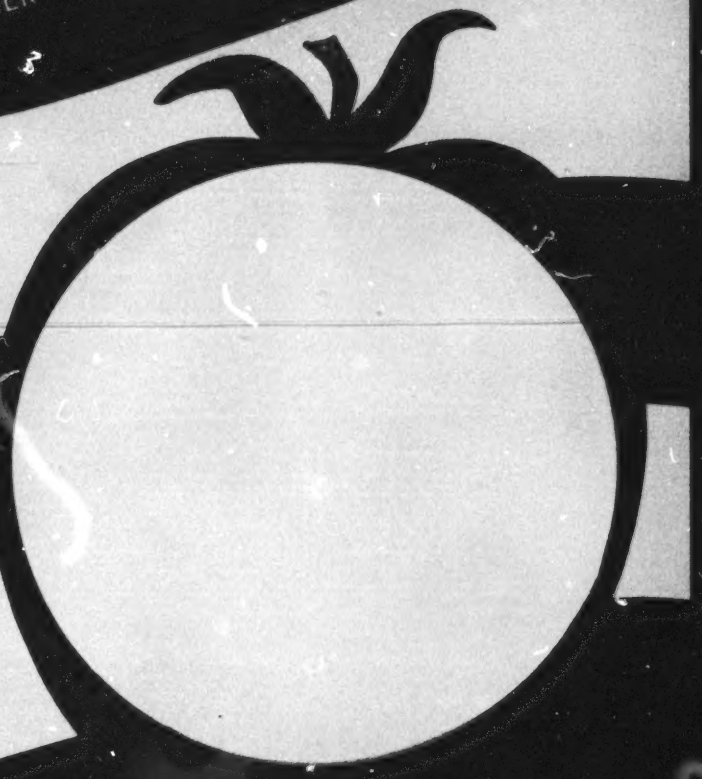

10th cycle TEACHER CORPS PROJECT

Emporia Kansas State College
Unified School District 330

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CERTIFICATION THROUGH PERFORMANCE PROJECTS--EMPORIA KANSAS STATE COLLEGE TEACHER CORPS PROJECT

The Performance Project Model for Field-Centered, Competency-Based Post Graduate Certification

Prepared for

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by

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Emporia Kansas State College Teacher Corps Project

THE PERFORMANCE PROJECT MODEL FOR FIELD-CENTERED, COMPETENCY-BASED, POST GRADUATE CERTIFICATION

Introduction

During the first year of the Sixth Cycle (1971-1973) Teacher Corps program at Emporia Kansas State College, a list of teacher competencies were developed with input from a variety of sources. Interns in teacher training contracted for a series of specific competencies in eight component areas and obtained individualized training to meet the criteria or standard agreed to for each competency.

Unfortunately, a considerable degree of misunderstanding arose with the interns in this process over the relationship of specific competencies to the facilitation of learning in the school and community. Competencies were seen as ends rather than means. After a great deal of discussion with interns and staff members, an alternative system for demonstrating teacher competencies was developed.

An Alternative: Performance Areas for Teacher Competence

To more nearly relate teaching skills or enabling competencies to the real performance world of the teacher, it was proposed that the intern demonstrate teacher competence through a series of performance projects in each of five performance areas. These are:

The Individual Student	(2)	The teacher is able to facilitate the growth and development of the individual student
The Group or Class	(2)	The teacher is able to provide instruction to and facilitate group processes with a group of students.
The School	(3)	The teacher is able to facilitate a team effort among his peers and promote a positive climate in the school.
The Community	(4)	The teacher is able to facilitate school involvement in the community and community involvement in the school.
The Profession	(5)	The teacher is able to communicate ideas and experiences to members of his/her profession.

In this proposed alternative system for demonstrating teacher competence, performance projects in each of the five performance areas are selected from the real experience world of the undergraduate, the intern, or the teacher in training. With the assistance and supervision of a team of qualified trainers from the college and the school, the individual in training contracts for projects and is responsible to the training team

for demonstrating that (1) the objectives of the project were achieved, and (2) that a systematic learning process was used in planning and implementing the project. Enabling competencies (knowledge and skills) needed to successfuly complete a performance project are acquired as needed by the trainee. The key to the completion of a performance project is the Systematic Learning Process Model presented below:

1. Initial Search
   Discerning a need from initial observations.

2. Debriefing
   Clarifying project assumptions, goals, and data which define the need.

3. Data Collection and Initial Write-Up
   Obtain definitive data and describe the need of the audience the project will serve as well as the objectives to reduce or eliminate the need.

4. Strategy Development
   Brainstorm alternative strategies and select the most effective plan.

5. Consideration of Skills and Resources
   Obtain the assistance of your team leader in listing the skills and resources needed to carry out your project.

6. Final Write-Up
   Develop your written project design including the following:

   a. project goal statement
   b. need statement
   c. project objective
   d. strategy or action plan
   e. competencies

7. Competency Development
   Obtain instruction essential to carry out your project (in consultation with team leader).

8. Project Approval
   Review plan with and obtain approval for implementation from the team leader and cooperating teacher.

9. Project Implementation
   Implement your plan with formative evaluation.

10. Project Write-Up
    Write up what happend and evaluate the results.

11. Project Evaluation
    Present your write-up and evaluation to your team leader. Sign-off by team leader and cooperating teacher.

12. Sign-off or Recycle.

By using such a process, the individual in training is assured (1) that the project has significance for the audience served, (2) that the skills needed to complete the project are considered, (3) that objectives of the project are stated, and (4) that an objective evaluation of the project can be made.

As the intern enters the program, he is placed in immediate contact with children, with schools, and with communities. Guided by a team of trainers and assisted by fellow trainees, he is able to complete phases 1 - 6 of the Learning Process Model and can describe real needs that exist. As the intern is ready, he contracts with the team leader for performance projects in each of the five areas and completes these projects going through phases 7 - 12 according to a schedule he sets for himself. Training in enabling skills is provided through various means. These are:

1. Initial instruction by team leader and college instructors in broad areas of motivation and control, interaction skills, and strategies of teaching.

2. Subsequent training as diagnosed in evaluation and goal setting meeting after each semester in training.

3. Availability of seminars, self-paced minicourses, and instructional modules, on demand.

4. Workshops and inservice activities available to regular faculty.

5. Consultation with team leader and cooperating teacher.

The following are illustrations of possible performance projects in each of the five performance areas of teacher competence:

Area 1 - The Individual Student

Diagnose, design, and provide instruction to a student who has failed a course, enabling him/her to complete the course.

Facilitate the development of a student's skills and attitudes to the level where he/she can complete an independent study project or a problem-solving activity on his/her own.

Facilitate a measurably significant and positive attitude change on the part of a student toward self, home, school, or people with whom he/she must deal in his/her life space.

Identify a student with a learning disability, diagnose and provide special instruction over a period of five weeks. Demonstrate that significant learning has taken place.

Area 2 - The Group or Class

Diagnose and provide instruction to a group of fifteen students for nine weeks with eighty percent of the students achieving the stated objectives and reporting a positive attitude toward the learning activity.

Facilitate the planning and implementation of a group project which achieves the goals the group establishes. Eighty percent must indicate, through an attitude scale, a more accepting attitude toward the group at the completion of the project than was measured at the beginning of the group activity.

Diagnose and provide instruction to a class of fifteeen or more students where each one is working toward individual objectives. Eighty percent of the students must complete the learning activity in a pre-stated time and feel it was a positive learning experience.

Facilitate a group problem-solving activity for ten to fifteen students. Facilitate identification of a problem of common interest, the planning of alternate strategies, the implementation of a group selected plan and group evaluation of the results and the process.

Area 3 - The Peer Group or School Faculty

Pair up with a fellow intern and demonstrate professional growth through interactive learning.

Identify a person who holds values that are significantly different from your own, work together on a project to completion, and demonstrate the ability to maintain a positive relationship.

Identify a situation in the school where a negative attitude exists with five or more people. Develop and implement a strategy to change the attitude to be more positive.

Organize school-wide effort among faculty to deal with a general need like motivation, drop-out rate, reading problems, etc.

Design and plan with the cooperation of the school administration a program to improve student-teacher relationships.

Area 4 - The Community

Participate in a community project.

Organize a group effort to meet a real need in the community involving school and community personnel.

Plan and implement an educational program for credit which uses the community as a learning laboratory and community persons as primary resource persons.

Plan and implement an educational project in which low income parents can assume a leadership role. Provide the opportunity for the development of leadership skills and success experiences for the parents involved.

Involve parents in the planning, development, and operation of a cooperative preschool.

Area 5 - The Profession

Present position papers to fellow corpsmen such as "The Ideal School," "How Children Learn," "The Ideal Self," etc. and exchange ideas.

Conduct research to provide positive evidence of an educational need that exists in the district. Successfully communicate the evidence to the administrator and faculty at a level where steps are taken to meet the existing need.

Some Specifics About Performance Projects

The Purpose of Performance Projects

Performance projects provide a process for demonstrating teaching competence while allowing the opportunity for creativity and individualization.

The Purpose of Criteria

Criteria establish minimal standards for acceptable performance projects in a Master of Science in Education program. It is assumed that the minimal standards for a Master's Degree exceeds the standards for certification.

The criteria should be so explicit that they clearly communicate to the intern the level of performance expected and yet be flexible enough to allow the intern the opportunity to demonstrate his own uniqueness.

It is believed that performance projects enable the demonstration of competence while maintaining the key elements of competency-based teacher education in a more integrated way than the method of completing a series of instructional modules or completing the assessment for a series of modules.

Assumptions Implied in Performance Projects

1. Good teaching and learning is a systematic problem-solving activity and that problem-solving is the most important single skill a teacher can demonstrate.

2. Teachers who demonstrate more complex integrated skills can demonstrate the more simple skills.

3. Five areas of performance which deal with five different audiences are essential to the role of the teacher.

4. Skills essential to the implementation of performance projects will be acquired prior to the conduct of a project.

Number of Projects to be Completed

The intern will complete ten performance projects. A minimum of one project must be completed in each area with the opportunity to negotiate the areas for the remaining five projects with the Educational Training Team.

It is assumed that understanding of self and interpersonal relationships will be integrated into all performance projects and that in planning implementation and evaluation of each project, the development of "self" will be considered.

Process and External Criteria

Both process criteria and external criteria will be used to judge the acceptability of projects. Process criteria refer to the steps that must be followed in developing, implementing, and evaluating. External criteria refer to those "lay ons" that will insure that certain guidelines are followed.

The Make-up of the Educational Training Team

The Educational Training Team should consist of the following:

1. The team leader
2. A cooperating teacher
3. Teacher Corps staff and instructors

The staff, with the intern, will decipher the competencies and level of performance demonstrated in the project. These will be added to the intern's profile for future consultation by the intern and the Educational Training Team.

Performance Project Process

Documentation of intern competence in the areas of individual, group or class, school, professional and community by the performance projects will be accepted as evidence of completion of education course requirements for post-graduate certification and for the Master's Degree program.

The following process, preceded by appropriate instruction, will be used in all performance projects.

Generating and Writing a Proposal

The development of an idea into a performance project can be facilitated by a process of brainstorming-clarification using the team members and team leader in special roles. These roles can be passed around, and, thus, result in learning a valuable problem-solving skill.

Role One - Idea Recorder

Take a piece of paper and put the headings for the various elements of a performance project on it (Goal Statement, Assumptions, etc.). As the person who is proposing brainstorms his idea, descriptive phrases would be entered in the appropriate column by the recorder. When the session is finished, the proposer would have only a mechanical process of writing to complete using the notes taken by the recorder as a guideline. Hopefully, this would allow the proposer to concentrate on one process at a time.

Role Two - Clarifier

The persons not recording would ask clarifying questions of the proposer while he is brainstorming. The purpose of this questioning is to help the proposer deal with the questions he will have to answer in order to develop an idea and actually write it up into a proposal. Therefore, these questions would deal with all of the areas that are on the sheet used by the recorder. These questions help probe for clarity in the elements of goal, need (assumption, dates, intern needs), objectives, strategy (time, materials, sequencing), skills and competencies. After the clarifying session, the proposer would get the record from the recorder and write up the proposal. i.e.:

Goal Statement

What are your trying to accomplish?
What will be the end product?
Who or what will benefit from it?

Need to be served

Assumptions

What would have to be true if this would work?
Why do people need the process, knowledge, skill, that they will get from being involved?
Is it necessary that the people involved need certain knowledge, skills, processes which will be gained by participating in the project?

Data

What are the characteristics of your audience?
Do people, in general, have the knowledge, process, or skill to be gained in your project?
When did they get the above?
How did they get the above?

Objectives

What kind of an objective do you have? (cognitive, performance, affective, expressive)
What are the behaviors?
What will be the situation?

What are the standards to determine success?
How will I evaluate?
What will I need to evaluate?

Strategy

What materials do I need?
How much time is necessary?
What activities are needed?
Do I have the facilities?
Who must I get approval from?
Do I need someone to help me?
What equipment do I need?
What sequence will I use?
What is my timeline?

Skills and Competencies

What knowledge do I need to do this project?
Where can I get information necessary?
What skills do I need?
Who can advise me about areas I need to know about?
Are the skills and knowledge necessary available to me?

Project Approval

The procedure for proposal approval is as follows:

1. Initial approval of team leader. Cooperating teacher's approval should be sought when appropriate.

2. Team leader and director of training give final approval for implementation.

Essential Elements in a Performance Project Write-up

Project Goal Statement

Provide the reader with a goal statement to orient him/her to the purpose of the project and to the audience served by the project.

Example: The purpose of this project is to develop the interpersonal relations skills of a class of six boys and eight girls, ages 12-14.

Need to be Served by the Project

The needs statement should contain: (1) assumption statements; (2) specific data about the real or existing world; and (3) the needs of the intern to be served by the project.

A need is an unfulfilled goal. A need is the discrepancy between the ideal and the real world.

A description of need thus implies: (1) assumption statements about the ideal world; and (2) specific data about the real world.

Assumptions

Examples of assumptions about the ideal world as it relates to educator are:

"Individuals require self esteem and self confidence for a happy life."
"Computation skills are essential to function in our present society."
"Individuals need opportunities for freedom of expression."
"All individuals need to be able to predict and control their immediate environment to feel secure."
"Knowledge and understanding of cultures different from our own are needed to create a pluralistic society."
"Man is a social being and requires opportunities for positive social interaction for growth."

Data

Data about the real world or the deficiencies that exist are more important than a gut level feeling about reality. Data about the real world should include numerical or performance data which clearly indicate the degree of need to be served by the project.

Intern Needs

Although performance projects demonstrate teaching competence, interns should also see them as learning experiences. In this way, interns' learning needs and interests are served by the project. Intern learning needs should be considered in developing a project. A balance should exist between the needs of an audience and the learners' needs in a performance project.

Project Objectives

The project objectives statement is behavioralized. A behavioral objective must have the following elements: (1) the behaviors to be demonstrated by the audience served by the project; (2) the situation in which the behaviors will be demonstrated; (3) the standards of performance to be expected; and (4) the procedure for evaluation of the project objectives (acceptable levels).

Objectives for a performance project may be: (1) cognitive - the attainment of knowledge and understanding; (2) performance - the attainment of skills; (3) affective - the attainment of attitudes and values; and (4) expressive - the completion of a process.

Evaluation of objectives must be appropriate. If the behavioral objective is written for participating students to achieve, i.e., students will score 75 percent on a post test, then the evaluation criteria might read, "80 percent of students will achieve 75 percent or more on a post test."

Project Strategy

A good strategy statement or action plan should describe: (1) a general scheme of activities which participants will accomplish; (2) a list of major tasks to be accomplished to reach the objective with an estimated timeline or deadline date for each task; and (3) formative evaluation points or times and the procedure for formative evaluation of your tasks.

A strategy is a set of activities, material, and time sequences scheduled to facilitate maximum learning or the maximum effect toward achieving a desired goal or objective. Activities such as media presentations, lectures, overviews, seminars, brainstorming, set inductions, individual conferences, individual projects, group discussions, group projects, modularized instruction, field trips, role playing, etc., can be sequenced with alternative routes to facilitate learning with a class. A different set of activities could be used to promote a team effort with a peer group or with school involvement in the community. In considering alternative strategies, data about your audience should be considered. You should be able to defend the strategy you select. Material could be textbooks, films, etc.

An example of a strategy statement might be as follows. Project goal: To increase students' knowledge about environmental problems and to develop the students' independent learning skills. General strategy: Develop students' knowledge base through an initial presentation and set induction. Brainstorm a list of environmental problems followed by a three-day small group (3-5) study project. Share group learning and discuss students' feelings toward independent learning. When students are ready, help each student develop an independent learning contract. Provide resources and individual assistance when needed. Allow students to determine how they want to share what they learned with other students. Have students evaluate the project and describe what they learned that was significant to them. Alternative strategy: Develop a set of "unipaks" consisting of a topic and a list of resources for the topic. Have students select a unipak and carry out an independent study project, e.g.: (1) Design independent learning contract - first week; (2) Independent contract - 2 - 9 weeks; and (3) Formative evaluation projects.

Skills or Competencies Essential for Project

The intern, with the help of his/her team leader, should list: (1) the areas of special knowledge essential to carry out the tasks in the strategy statement; and (2) the specific skills essential to carry out the strategy or action plan. Although the intern need not include a written explanation of his/her competence for implementing a plan, he/she should be prepared to orally defend his/her ability to carry out the plan using his/her performance profile or experience data.

The intern should also briefly describe what will be done to make up any deficiencies in knowledge or skills essential to the conduct of the project.

Write-up the Results

The interns should describe: (1) what took place during the implementation phase of the project; (2) the results of the strategy; and (3) data collected during the implementation phase.

The evaluation should: (1) Provide concrete evidence that the objectives were accomplished, or provide logical explanations why the objectives were not achieved; (2) Describe what changes would be recommended if the project were to be repeated; (3) Describe what was learned in the conduct of the project; and (4) List the competencies from the interns' performance profile that were demonstrated and the level of performance demonstrated.